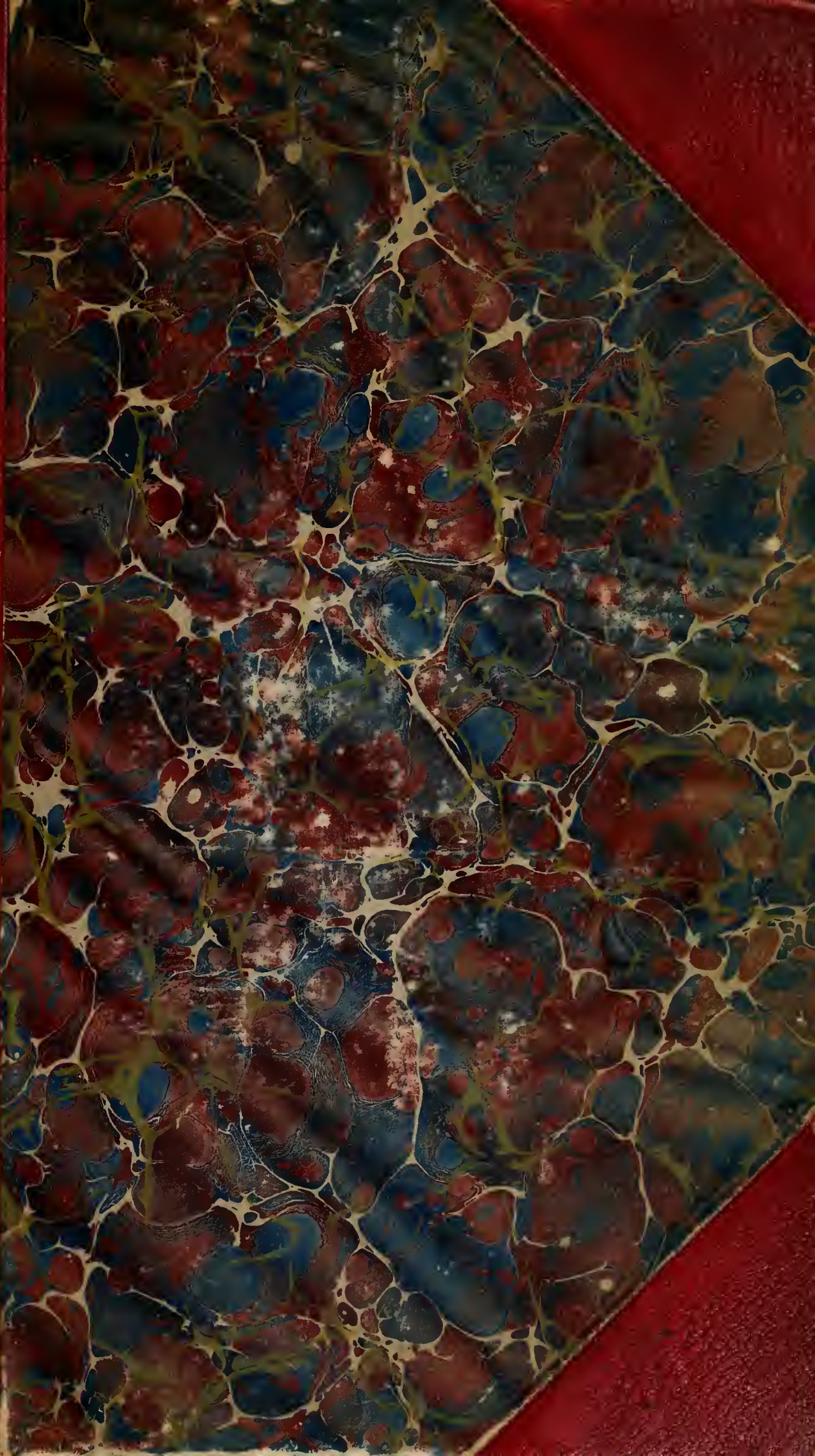


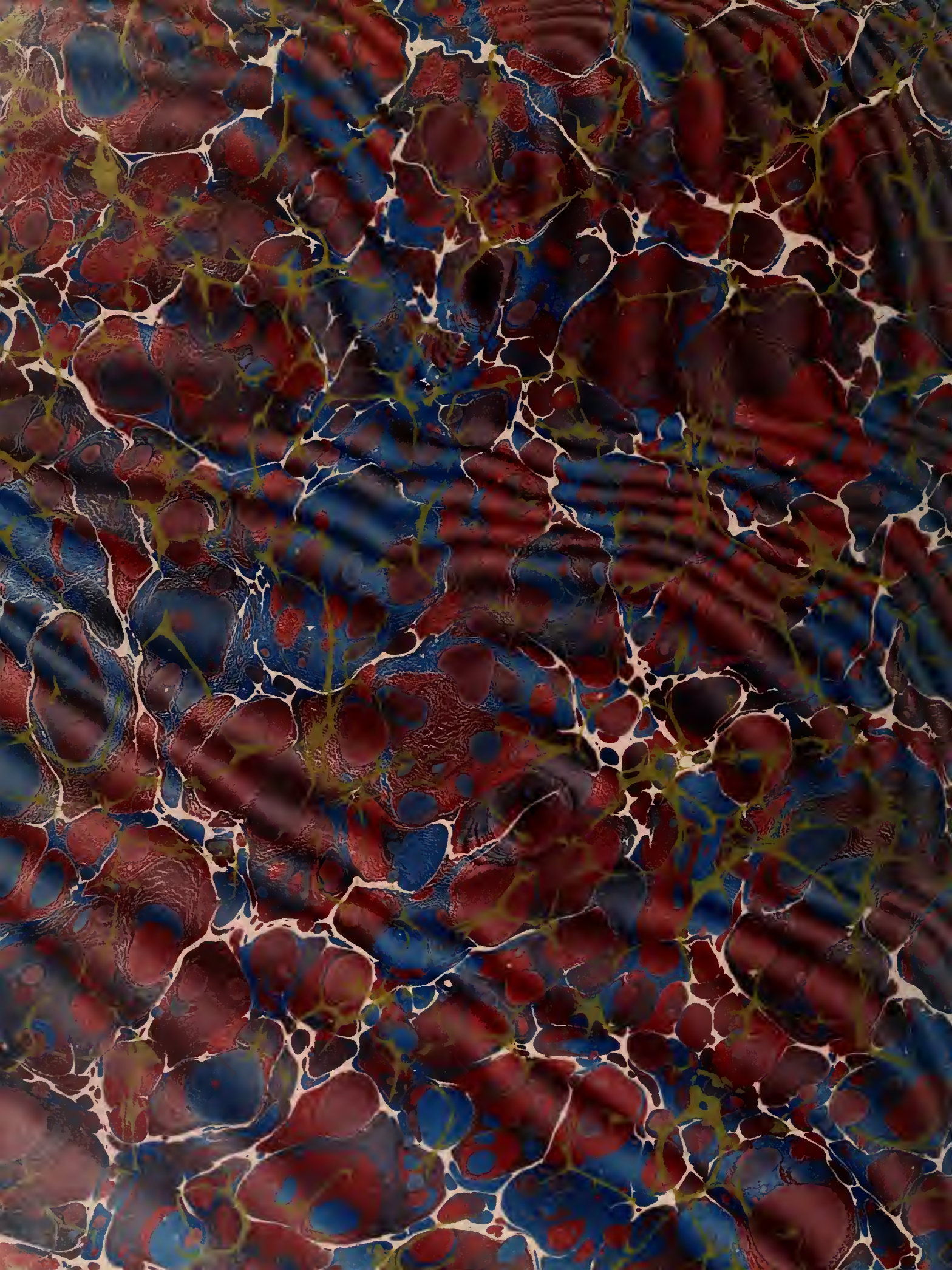
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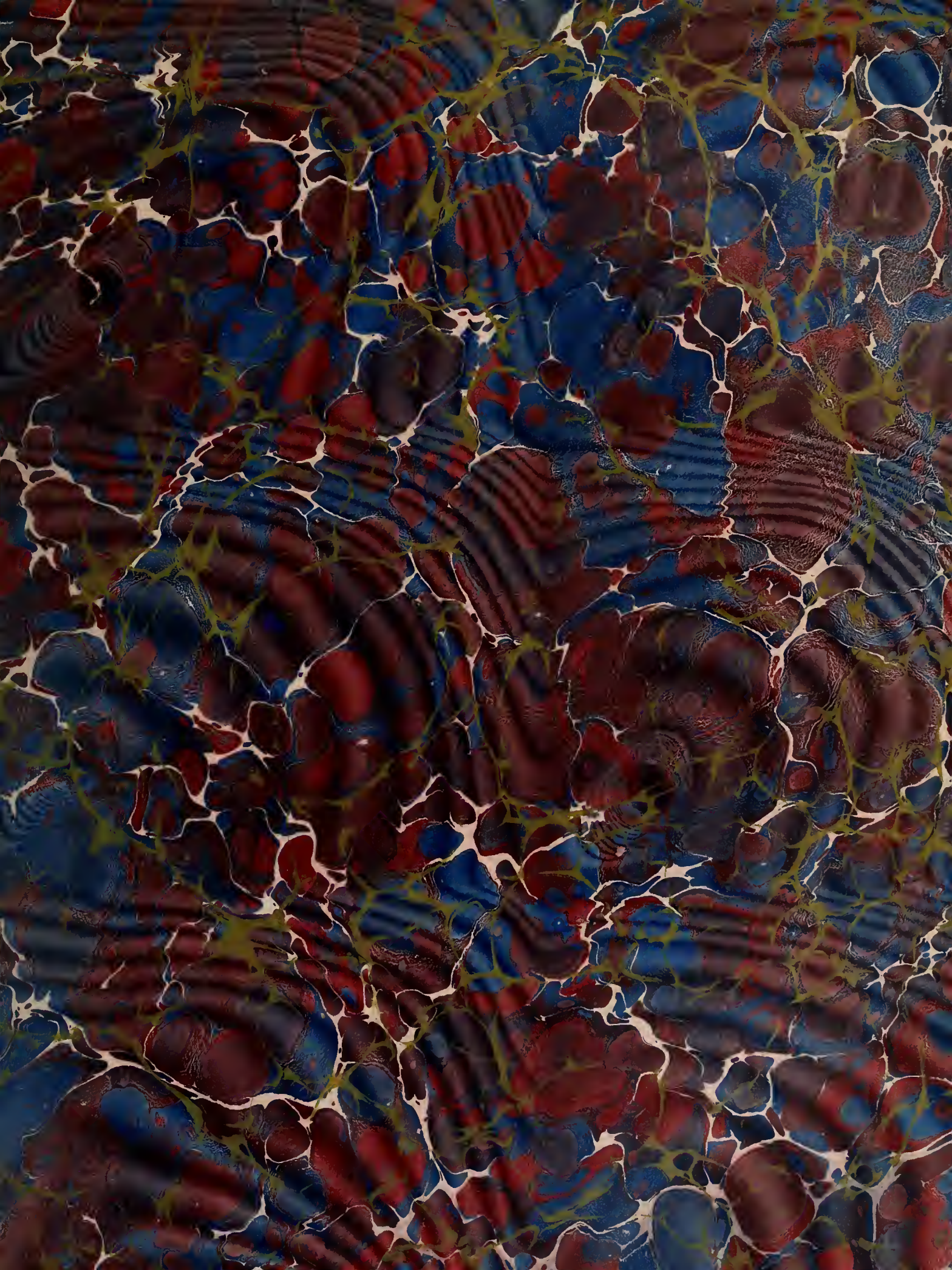
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THE  
HERMIT OF WARKWORTH,

A Northumberland Ballad.

BY THE  
REV. DR. PERCY.

EMBELLISHED WITH WOOD ENGRAVINGS

BY  
NESBITT AND CLENNELL,

FROM DESIGNS BY THURSTON.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR ROBERT SCHOLEY, 46, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

*By Thomas Davison, Whitefriars.*

1806.





TO HER GRACE

*ELIZABETH*

DUCHESS AND COUNTESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND,

IN HER OWN RIGHT

BARONESS PERCY.

Down in a northern vale wild flowrets grew,  
And lent new sweetness to the summer gale;  
The Muse there found them all remote from view,  
Obscur'd with weeds, and scatter'd o'er the dale.

O Lady, may so slight a gift prevail,  
And at your gracious hands acceptance find?  
Say, may an ancient legendary tale  
Amuse, delight, or move the polish'd mind?

Surely the cares and woes of human kind,  
Though simply told, will gain each gentle ear:  
But all for you the Muse her lay design'd,  
And bade your noble Ancestors appear:

She seeks no other praise, if you commend,  
Her great protectress, patroness, and friend.





## ADVERTISEMENT.

WARKWORTH CASTLE in Northumberland stands very boldly on a neck of land near the sea-shore, almost surrounded by the river COQUET (called by our old Latin Historians, COQUEDA), which runs with a clear rapid stream, but when swoln with rains becomes violent and dangerous.

About a mile from the Castle, in a deep romantic valley, are the remains of a HERMITAGE; of which the Chapel is still entire. This is hollowed with great elegance in a cliff near the river; as are also two adjoining apartments, which probably served for the Sacristy and Vestry, or were appropriated to some other sacred uses: for the former of these, which runs parallel with the Chapel, appears to have had an Altar in it, at which Mass was occasionally celebrated, as well as in the Chapel itself.

Each of these apartments is extremely small; for that which was the principal Chapel does not in length exceed eighteen feet; nor is more than seven feet and a half in breadth and height: it is however very beau-

tifully designed and executed in the solid rock; and has all the decorations of a complete Gothic Church or Cathedral in miniature.

But what principally distinguishes the Chapel, is a small Tomb or Monument, on the south side of the altar: on the top of which, lies a Female Figure extended in the manner that effigies are usually exhibited praying on ancient tombs. This figure, which is very delicately designed, some have ignorantly called an image of the Virgin Mary; though it has not the least resemblance to the manner in which she is represented in the Romish Churches; who is usually erect, as the object of adoration, and never in a prostrate or recumbent posture. Indeed the real image of the Blessed Virgin probably stood in a small nich, still visible behind the altar: whereas the figure of a Bull's Head, which is rudely carved at this Lady's feet, the usual place for the Crest in old monuments, plainly proves her to have been a very different personage.

About this tomb are several other Figures; which, as well as the principal one above-mentioned, are cut in the natural rock, in the same manner as the little Chapel itself, with all its Ornaments, and the two



adjoining Apartments. What slight traditions are scattered through the country concerning the origin and foundation of this Hermitage, Tomb, &c. are delivered to the Reader in the following rhymes.

It is universally believed, that the Founder was one of the BERTRAM family\*, which had once considerable possessions in Northumberland, and were anciently Lords of Bothal Castle, situate about ten miles from Warkworth. He has been thought to be the same BERTRAM that endowed BRINKBURN Priory, and built BRENKSHAUGH Chapel: which both stand in the same winding valley, higher up the river.

\* That this Hermitage was formed for the retreat of one of the BERTRAM family, who had killed his brother, had been the tradition of the Country, as the Author was assured by the Reverend Mr. Lawson, a very worthy Clergyman, who was Rector of Warkworth when this poem was first published in 1770. He had succeeded his father in this benefice, and they two had then enjoyed it more than half a century. The catastrophe of the Lady was suggested by the figure on the Tomb.

How well such a tradition might be preserved, and handed down by these two incumbents, will appear from the following dates in the Parish Register at Warkworth, viz.

The Reverend Wilfrid Lawson was inducted into this Living, May 4th, 1717, and died April 1st, 1732, aged 56.

He was succeeded by his Son the Reverend Wilfrid Lawson, jun. who was inducted June 22, 1732, and held the same till his death, November 27, 1777.

BUT BRINKBURN Priory was founded in the reign of K. Henry I.\* whereas the form of the Gothic Windows in this Chapel, especially of those near the altar, are found rather to resemble the style of architecture that prevailed about the reign of K. Edward III. And indeed that the sculpture in this Chapel cannot be much older, appears from the Crest which is placed at the Lady's feet on the tomb†; for Camden‡ informs us, that armorial Crests did not become hereditary till about the reign of K. Edward II.

These appearances, still extant, strongly confirm the account given in the following poem, and plainly prove that the HERMIT of WARKWORTH was not the same person that founded BRINKBURN Priory in the twelfth century, but rather one of the BERTRAM family, who lived at a later period.

\* Tanner's Notitia Monast.

† That this was the usual position of the Crest on ancient Tombs may be seen in the numerous instances displayed by Mr. Gough and other Antiquaries, in their plates of Ancient Monuments.

‡ See his Remains.

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*FIT was the word used by the old Minstrels to signify a PART or DIVISION of their Historical Songs, and was peculiarly appropriated to this kind of compositions.—See Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, Vol. II. p. 166 and 397. 2d Ed.*



FIT THE FIRST.

**D**ARK was the night, and wild the storm,  
And loud the torrent's roar;  
And loud the sea was heard to dash  
Against the distant shore:

Musing on man's weak hapless state,  
The lonely Hermit lay;  
When, lo! he heard a female voice  
Lament in sore dismay.



With hospitable haste he rose,  
    And wak'd his sleeping fire;  
And snatching up a lighted brand,  
    Forth hied the reverend sire.

All sad beneath a neighbouring tree  
    A beauteous maid he found,  
Who beat her breast, and with her tears  
    Bedew'd the mossy ground.

Oh! weep not, lady, weep not so;  
    Nor let vain fears alarm;  
My little cell shall shelter thee,  
    And keep thee safe from harm.

It is not for myself I weep,  
    Nor for myself I fear;  
But for my dear and only friend,  
    Who lately left me here:

And while some shelt'ring bower he sought  
    Within this lonely wood,  
Ah! sore I fear his wand'ring feet  
    Have slipt in yonder flood.

Oh! trust in Heaven, the Hermit said,  
And to my cell repair;  
Doubt not but I shall find thy friend,  
And ease thee of thy care.

Then climbing up his rocky stairs,  
He scales the cliff so high;  
And calls aloud, and waves his light  
To guide the stranger's eye.

Among the thickets long he winds  
With careful steps and slow:  
At length a voice return'd his call,  
Quick answering from below:

Oh! tell me, father, tell me true,  
If you have chanc'd to see  
A gentle maid, I lately left  
Beneath some neighbouring tree:

But either I have lost the place,  
Or she hath gone astray:  
And much I fear this fatal stream  
Hath snatch'd her hence away.

Praise Heaven, my son, the Hermit said;  
The lady's safe and well:  
And soon he join'd the wandering youth,  
And brought him to his cell.

Then well was seen, these gentle friends  
They lov'd each other dear:  
The youth he press'd her to his heart;  
The maid let fall a tear.

Ah! seldom had their host, I ween,  
Beheld so sweet a pair:  
The youth was tall, with manly bloom;  
She slender, soft, and fair.

The youth was clad in forest green,  
With bugle-horn so bright:  
She in a silken robe and scarf,  
Snatch'd up in hasty flight.

Sit down, my children, says the Sage;  
Sweet rest your limbs require:  
Then heaps fresh fuel on the hearth,  
And mends his little fire.



Partake, he said, my simple store,  
Dried fruits, and milk, and curds;  
And spreading all upon the board,  
Invites with kindly words.

Thanks, father, for thy bounteous fare;  
The youthful couple say:  
Then freely ate, and made good cheer,  
And talk'd their cares away.

Now say, my children, (for perchance  
My council may avail,)  
What strange adventure brought you here  
Within this lonely dale?

First tell me, father, said the youth,  
(Nor blame mine eager tongue,)  
What town is here? What lands are these?  
And to what lord belogn?

Alas, my son! the Hermit said,  
Why do I live to say,  
The rightful lord of these domains  
Is banish'd far away!

Ten winters now have shed their snows  
On this my lowly hall,  
Since valiant HOTSPUR (so the North  
Our youthful lord did call)

Against Fourth HENRY BOLINGBROKE  
Led up his northern powers,  
And stoutly fighting lost his life  
Near proud Salopia's towers.

One son he left, a lovely boy,  
His country's hope and heir;  
And, oh! to save him from his foes  
It was his grandsire's care.

In Scotland safe he plac'd the child  
Beyond the reach of strife,  
Not long before the brave old Earl  
At Bramham lost his life.

And now the PERCY name, so long  
Our northern pride and boast,  
Lies hid, alas! beneath a cloud;  
Their honours reft and lost.

No chieftain of that noble house  
 Now leads our youth to arms;  
 The bordering Scots dispoil our fields,  
 And ravage all our farms.

Their halls and castles, once so fair,  
 Now moulder in decay;  
 Proud strangers now usurp their lands,  
 And bear their wealth away.

Not far from hence, where yon full stream  
 Runs winding down the lea,  
 Fair WARKWORTH lifts her lofty towers,  
 And overlooks the sea.

Those towers, alas! now stand forlorn,  
 With noisome weeds o'erspread,  
 Where feasted lords, and courtly dames,  
 And where the poor were fed.

Meantime far off, 'mid Scottish hills,  
 The PERCY lives unknown:  
 On strangers' bounty he depends,  
 And may not claim his own.



Oh, might I with these aged eyes  
 But live to see him here,  
 Then should my soul depart in bliss!--  
 He said, and dropt a tear.

And is the PERCY still so lov'd  
 Of all his friends and thee?  
 Then bless me, father, said the youth,  
 For I thy guest am HE.

Silent he gaz'd, then turn'd aside  
 To wipe the tears he shed;  
 And lifting up his hands and eyes,  
 Pour'd blessings on his head.

Welcome, our dear and much-lov'd LORD,  
 Thy country's hope and care:  
 But who may this young lady be,  
 That is so wondrous fair?

Now, father, listen to my tale,  
 And thou shalt know the truth:  
 And let thy sage advice direct  
 My unexperie'd youth.

In Scotland I've been nobly bred,  
 Beneath the Regent's hand<sup>1</sup>,  
 In feats of arms, and every lore,  
 To fit me for command.

With fond impatience long I burn'd  
 My native land to see:  
 At length I won my guardian friend,  
 To yield that boon to me.

Then up and down in hunter's garb  
 I wander'd as in chace,  
 Till in the noble NEVILLE'S<sup>2</sup> house  
 I gain'd a hunter's place.

Some time with him I liv'd unknown,  
 Till I'd the hap so rare,  
 To please this young and gentle dame,  
 That baron's daughter fair.

Now, PERCY, said the blushing maid,  
 The truth I must reveal;  
 Souls great and generous, like to thine,  
 Their noble deeds conceal.

It happen'd on a summer's day,  
    Led by the fragrant breeze,  
I wander'd forth to take the air  
    Among the green-wood trees;

Sudden a band of rugged Scots,  
    That near in ambush lay,  
Moss-troopers from the border-side,  
    There seiz'd me for their prey.

My shrieks had all been spent in vain,  
    But Heaven, that saw my grief,  
Brought this brave youth within my call,  
    Who flew to my relief.

With nothing but his hunting spear,  
    And dagger in his hand,  
He sprung like lightning on my foes,  
    And caus'd them soon to stand.

He fought, till more assistance came;  
    The Scots were overthrown;  
Thus freed me, captive, from their bands,  
    To make me more his own.



O happy day! the youth replied;  
 Blest were the wounds I bare!  
 From that fond hour she deign'd to smile,  
 And listen to my prayer.

And when she knew my name and birth,  
 She vow'd to be my bride;  
 But oh! we fear'd (alas, the while!)  
 Her princely mother's pride:

Sister of haughty BOLINGBROKE<sup>3</sup>,  
 Our house's ancient foe,  
 To me I thought a banish'd wight  
 Could ne'er such favour show.

Despairing then to gain consent,  
 At length to fly with me  
 I won this lovely timorous maid:—  
 To Scotland bound are we.

This evening, as the night drew on,  
 Fearing we were pursu'd,  
 We turn'd adown the right-hand path,  
 And gain'd this lonely wood:

Then lighting from our weary steeds  
To shun the pelting shower,  
We met thy kind conducting hand,  
And reach'd this friendly bower.

Now rest ye both, the Hermit said;  
Awhile your cares forego:  
Nor, lady, scorn my humble bed;  
—We'll pass the night below<sup>†</sup>.





FIT THE SECOND.

LOVELY smil'd the blushing morn,  
And every storm was fled;  
But lovelier far, with sweeter smile,  
Fair ELEANOR left her bed.

She found her HENRY all alone,  
And cheer'd him with her sight:  
The youth consulting with his friend  
Had watch'd the livelong night.

What sweet surprize o'erpower'd her breast!  
 Her cheek what blushes dy'd!  
 When fondly he besought her there  
 To yield to be his bride.

Within this lonely hermitage  
 There is a chapel meet:  
 Then grant, dear maid, my fond request,  
 And make my bliss complete.

O HENRY! when thou deign'st to sue,  
 Can I thy suit withstand?  
 When thou, lov'd youth! hast won my heart,  
 Can I refuse my hand?

For thee I left a father's smiles,  
 And mother's tender care;  
 And, whether weal or woe betide,  
 Thy lot I mean to share.

And wilt thou then, O gen'rous maid!  
 Such matchless favour show,  
 To share with me, a banish'd wight,  
 My peril, pain, or woe?



Now Heaven, I trust, hath joys in store  
 To crown thy constant breast;  
 For, know, fond hope assures my heart  
 That we shall soon be blest.

Not far from hence stands COQUET Isle<sup>5</sup>,  
 Surrounded by the sea;  
 There dwells a holy friar, well known  
 To all thy friends and thee:

'Tis father Bernard, so rever'd  
 For every worthy deed;  
 To RABY castle he shall go,  
 And for us kindly plead.

To fetch this good and holy man  
 Our reverend host is gone;  
 And soon, I trust, his pious hands  
 Will join us both in one.

Thus they in sweet and tender talk  
 The lingering hours beguile:  
 At length they see the hoary sage  
 Come from the neighbouring isle.

With pious joy and wonder mix'd  
 He greets the noble pair,  
 And glad consents to join their hands  
 With many a fervent pray'r.

Then straight to RABY's distant walls  
 He kindly wends his way;  
 Meantime in love and dalliance sweet  
 They spend the livelong day.

And now, attended by their host,  
 The Hermitage they view'd,  
 Deep-hewn within a craggy cliff,  
 And over-hung with wood.

And near a flight of shapely steps,  
 All cut with nicest skill,  
 And piercing through a stony arch,  
 Ran winding up the hill.

There deck'd with many a flower and herb  
 His little Garden stands;  
 With fruitful trees in shady rows,  
 All planted by his hands.

Then, scoop'd within the solid rock,  
 Three sacred Vaults he shows.—  
 The chief a Chapel, neatly arch'd,  
 On branching Columns rose.

Each proper ornament was there,  
 That should a chapel grace:  
 The Lattice for confession fram'd,  
 And Holy-water Vase.

O'er either door a sacred Text  
 Invites to godly fear;  
 And in a little Scutcheon hung  
 The cross, and crown, and spear.

Up to the Altar's ample breadth  
 Two easy steps ascend;  
 And near a glimmering solemn light  
 Two well-wrought Windows lend.

Beside the altar rose a Tomb  
 All in the living stone;  
 On which a young and beauteous Maid  
 In goodly sculpture shone.

A kneeling Angel fairly carv'd  
 Lean'd hovering o'er her breast;  
 A weeping warrior at her feet;  
 And near to these her Crest<sup>6</sup>.

The cliff, the vault, but chief the tomb,  
 Attract the wondring pair:  
 Eager they ask, What hapless dame  
 Lies sculptur'd here so fair?

The Hermit sigh'd, the Hermit wept,  
 For sorrow scarce could speak:  
 At length he wip'd the trickling tears  
 That all bedew'd his cheek:

Alas! my children, human life  
 Is but a vale of woe;  
 And very mournful is the tale  
 Which ye so fain would know.







## THE HERMIT'S TALE.

YOUNG lord, thy grandsire had a friend  
In days of youthful fame;  
Yon distant hills were his domains;  
SIR BERTRAM was his name.

Where'er the noble PERCY fought  
His friend was at his side;  
And many a skirmish with the Scots  
Their early valour tried.

Young Bertram lov'd a beauteous maid,  
As fair as fair might be:  
The dew-drop on the lily's cheek  
Was not so fair as she.

Fair WIDDRINGTON the maiden's name;  
Yon tower's her dwelling place:  
Her sire an old Northumbrian chief  
Devoted to thy race.

Many a lord, and many a knight,  
To this fair damsel came;  
But Bertram was her only choice—  
For him she felt a flame.

Lord PERCY pleaded for his friend,  
Her father soon consents;  
None but the beauteous maid herself  
His wishes now prevents.

But she with studied fond delays  
    Defers the blissful hour;  
And loves to try his constancy,  
    And prove her maiden power.

That heart, she said, is lightly priz'd  
    Which is too lightly won;  
And long shall rue that easy maid  
    Who yields her love too soon.

Lord PERCY made a solemn feast  
    In Alnwick's princely hall;  
And there came lords, and there came knights,  
    His chiefs and barons all.

With wassel, mirth, and revelry,  
    The castle rung around:  
Lord PERCY call'd for song and harp,  
    And pipes of martial sound.

The minstrels of thy noble house,  
    All clad in robes of blue,  
With silver crescents on their arms,  
    Attend in order due.

The great atchievements of thy race  
 They sung: their high command:  
 How valiant MAINFRED o'er the seas  
 First led his northern band<sup>8</sup>.

Brave GOLFRED next to Normandy  
 With venturous Rollo came;  
 And from his Norman castles won,  
 Assum'd the PERCY name<sup>9</sup>.

They sung, how in the Conqueror's fleet  
 Lord WILLIAM shipp'd his powers,  
 And gain'd a fair young Saxon bride,  
 With all her lands and towers<sup>10</sup>.

Then journeying to the Holy Land,  
 There bravely fought and died:  
 But first the silver Crescent won,  
 Some paynim Soldan's pride.

They sung, how AGNES, beauteous heir,  
 The queen's own brother wed,  
 Lord JOSCELINE, sprung from Charlemagne,  
 In princely Brabant bred<sup>11</sup>.



How he the PERCY name reviv'd;  
And how his noble line,  
Still foremost in their country's cause,  
With godlike ardour shine.

With loud acclaims the listening crowd  
Applaud the master's song,  
And deeds of arms and war became  
The theme of ev'ry tongue.

Now high heroic acts they tell,  
Their perils past recall:  
When, lo! a damsel, young and fair,  
Stepp'd forward through the hall.

She Bertram courteously address'd;  
And kneeling on her knee;  
Sir knight, the lady of thy love  
Hath sent this gift to thee.

Then forth she drew a glittering helme,  
Well-plated many a fold,  
The casque was wrought of temper'd steel,  
The crest of burnish'd gold.

Sir knight, thy lady sends thee this,  
And yields to be thy bride,  
When thou hast prov'd this maiden gift  
Where sharpest blows are tried.

Young Bertram took the shining helme,  
And thrice he kiss'd the same:  
Trust me, I'll prove this precious casque  
With deeds of noblest fame.

Lord PERCY, and his barons bold,  
Then fix upon a day  
To scour the marches, late opprest,  
And Scottish wrongs repay.

The knights assembled on the hills  
A thousand horse and more:  
Brave Widdrington, though sunk in years,  
The PERCY-standard bore.

Tweed's limpid current soon they pass,  
And range the borders round:  
Down the green slopes of Tiviotdale  
Their bugle-horns resound.

As when a lion in his den  
Hath heard the hunters' cries,  
And rushes forth to meet his foes,  
So did the DOUGLAS rise.

Attendant on their chief's command  
A thousand warriors wait:  
And now the fatal hour drew on  
Of cruel keen debate.

A chosen troop of Scottish youths  
Advance before the rest;  
Lord PERCY mark'd their gallant mien,  
And thus his friend address'd.

Now, Bertram, prove thy Lady's helme,  
Attack yon forward band;  
Dead or alive I'll rescue thee,  
Or perish by their hand.

Young Bertram bow'd, with glad assent,  
And spurr'd his eager steed,  
And calling on his Lady's name,  
Rush'd forth with whirlwind speed.

As when a grove of sapling oaks  
 The livid lightning rends;  
 So fiercely 'mid the opposing ranks  
 Sir Bertram's sword descends.

This way and that he drives the steel,  
 And keenly pierces through;  
 And many a tall and comely knight  
 With furious force he slew.

Now closing fast on every side  
 They hem Sir Bertram round;  
 But dauntless he repels their rage,  
 And deals forth many a wound.

The vigour of his single arm  
 Had well-nigh won the field;  
 When ponderous fell a Scottish ax,  
 And clove his lifted shield.

Another blow his temple took,  
 And reft his helme in twain;  
 That beauteous helme, his Lady's gift!  
 — His blood bedew'd the plain.



Lord PERCY saw his champion fall  
Amid the unequal fight;  
And now, my noble friends, he said,  
Let's save this gallant knight.

Then rushing in with stretch'd-out shield  
He o'er the warrior hung;  
As some fierce eagle spreads her wing  
To guard her callow young.

Three times they strove to seize their prey,  
Three times they quick retire:  
What force could stand his furious strokes,  
Or meet his martial fire?

Now gathering round on ev'ry part,  
The battle rag'd amain;  
And many a lady wept her lord  
That hour untimely slain.

PERCY and DOUGLAS, great in arms,  
There all their courage show'd;  
And all the field was strew'd with dead,  
And all with crimson flow'd.

At length the glory of the day  
The Scots reluctant yield,  
And, after wondrous valour shown,  
They slowly quit the field.

All pale extended on their shields,  
And welt'ring in his gore,  
Lord PERCY's knights their bleeding friend  
To WARK's<sup>12</sup> fair castle bore.

Well hast thou earn'd my daughter's love,  
Her father kindly said;  
And she herself shall dress thy wounds,  
And tend thee in thy bed.

A message went, no daughter came;  
Fair ISABEL ne'er appears:  
Beshrew me, said the aged chief,  
Young maidens have their fears.

Cheer up, my son, thou shalt her see  
So soon as thou canst ride;  
And she shall nurse thee in her bower,  
And she shall be thy bride.

Sir Bertram at her name reviv'd,  
He bless'd the soothing sound;  
Fond hope supplied the Nurse's care,  
And heal'd his ghastly wound.









FIT THE THIRD.

ONE early morn, while dewy drops  
Hung trembling on the tree,  
Sir Bertram from his sick-bed rose—  
His bride he would go see.

A brother he had, in prime of youth,  
Of courage firm and keen,  
And he would tend him on the way,  
Because his wounds were green.

All day o'er moss and moor they rode,  
By many a lonely tower;  
And 't was the dew-fall of the night  
Ere they drew near her bower.

Most drear and dark the castle seem'd,  
That wont to shine so bright;  
And long and loud Sir Bertram call'd  
Ere he beheld a light.

At length her aged Nurse arose,  
With voice so shrill and clear:  
What wight is this, that calls so loud,  
And knocks so boldly here?

'Tis Bertram calls, thy Lady's love,  
Come from his bed of care:  
All day I've ridden o'er moor and moss  
To see thy Lady fair.

Now out, alas! (she loudly shriek'd)  
Alas! how may this be?  
For six long days are gone and past  
Since she set out to thee.

Sad terror seiz'd Sir Bertram's heart,  
And ready was he to fall;  
When now the draw-bridge was let down,  
And gates were open'd all.

Six days, young knight, are past and gone,  
Since she set out to thee;  
And sure if no sad harm had hap'd  
Long since thou wouldst her see.

For when she heard thy grievous chance,  
She tore her hair, and cried,  
Alas! I've slain the comeliest knight,  
All through my folly and pride!

And now t' atone for my sad fault,  
And his dear health regain,  
I'll go myself, and nurse my love,  
And soothe his bed of pain.

Then mounted she her milk-white steed  
One morn at break of day;  
And two tall yeomen went with her  
To guard her on the way.

Sad terror smote Sir Bertram's heart,  
    And grief o'erwhelm'd his mind:  
Trust me, said he, I ne'er will rest  
    Till I thy Lady find.

That night he spent in sorrow and care;  
    And with sad boding heart,  
Or ere the dawning of the day  
    His brother and he depart.

Now, brother, we'll our ways divide,  
    O'er Scottish hills to range:  
Do thou go north, and I'll go west;  
    And all our dress we'll change.

Some Scottish carle hath seiz'd my love,  
    And borne her to his den;  
And ne'er will I tread English ground  
    Till she's restor'd agen.

The brothers strait their paths divide,  
    O'er Scottish hills to range;  
And hide themselves in quaint disguise,  
    And oft their dress they change.



Sir Bertram clad in gown of gray,  
Most like a Palmer poor,  
To halls and castles wanders round,  
And begs from door to door.

Sometimes a Minstrel's garb he wears,  
With pipes so sweet and shrill;  
And wends to every tower and town,  
O'er every dale and hill.

One day as he sate under a thorn,  
All sunk in deep despair,  
An aged Pilgrim pass'd him by,  
Who mark'd his face of care.

All Minstrels yet that e'er I saw,  
Are full of game and glee:  
But thou art sad and woe-begone!  
I marvel whence it be!

Father, I serve an aged Lord,  
Whose grief afflicts my mind;  
His only child is stol'n away,  
And fain I would her find.

Cheer up, my son; perchance (he said)  
Some tidings I may bear:  
For oft when human hopes have fail'd,  
Then heavenly comfort's near.

Behind yon hills, so steep and high,  
Down in a lowly glen,  
There stands a castle fair and strong,  
Far from th' abode of men.

As late I chanc'd to crave an alms  
About this evening hour,  
Methought I heard a Lady's voice  
Lamenting in the tower.

And when I ask'd, what harm had happ'd,  
What Lady sick there lay?  
They rudely drove me from the gate,  
And bade me wend away.

These tidings caught Sir Bertram's ear,  
He thank'd him for his tale;  
And soon he hasted o'er the hills,  
And soon he reach'd the vale.

Then drawing near those lonely towers,  
Which stood in dale so low,  
And sitting down beside the gate,  
His pipes he 'gan to blow.

Sir Porter, is thy lord at home  
To hear a Minstrel's song?  
Or may I crave a lodging here,  
Without offence or wrong?

My Lord, he said, is not at home,  
To hear a Minstrel's song:  
And should I lend thee lodging here,  
My life would not be long.

He play'd again so soft a strain,  
Such power sweet sounds impart,  
He won the churlish Porter's ear,  
And mov'd his stubborn heart.

Minstrel, he said, thou play'st so sweet,  
Fair entrance thou shouldst win;  
But, alas! I'm sworn upon the rood  
To let no stranger in.

Yet, Minstrel, in yon rising cliff  
    Thou'lt find a sheltering cave;  
And here thou shalt my supper share,  
    And there thy lodging have.

All day he sits beside the gate,  
    And pipes both loud and clear:  
All night he watches round the walls,  
    In hopes his love to hear.

The first night, as he silent watch'd,  
    All at the midnight hour,  
He plainly heard his Lady's voice  
    Lamenting in the tower.

The second night the moon shone clear,  
    And gilt the spangled dew;  
He saw his Lady through the grate,  
    But 'twas a transient view.

The third night wearied out he slept  
    'Till near the morning tide;  
When, starting up, he seiz'd his sword,  
    And to the castle hied.



When, lo! he saw a ladder of ropes  
    Depending from the wall;  
And o'er the mote was newly laid  
    A poplar strong and tall.

And soon he saw his love descend,  
    Wrapt in a Tartan plaid;  
Assisted by a sturdy youth  
    In highland garb y-clad.

Amaz'd, confounded at the sight,  
    He lay unseen and still;  
And soon he saw them cross the stream,  
    And mount the neighbouring hill.

Unheard, unknown of all within,  
    The youthful couple fly.  
But what can 'scape the lover's ken?  
    Or shun his piercing eye?

With silent steps he follows close  
    Behind the flying pair,  
And saw her hang upon his arm  
    With fond familiar air.

Thanks, gentle youth, she often said;  
My thanks thou well hast won:  
For me what wiles hast thou contriv'd!  
For me what dangers run!

And ever shall my grateful heart  
Thy services repay:—  
Sir Bertram would no further hear,  
But cried, Vile traitor, stay!

Vile traitor, yield that Lady up!  
And quick his sword he drew:  
The stranger turn'd in sudden rage,  
And at Sir Bertram flew.

With mortal hate their vigorous arms  
Gave many a vengeful blow:  
But Bertram's stronger hand prevail'd,  
And laid the stranger low.

Die, traitor, die!—A deadly thrust  
Attends each furious word.  
Ah! then fair Isabel knew his voice,  
And rush'd beneath his sword.

Oh, stop! she cried, Oh, stop thy arm!  
 Thou dost thy brother slay!—  
 And here the Hermit paus'd, and wept:  
 His tongue no more could say.

At length he cried, Ye lovely pair,  
 How shall I tell the rest?—  
 Ere I could stop my piercing sword,  
 It fell, and stabb'd her breast.

Wert thou thyself that hapless youth?  
 Ah, cruel fate! they said.  
 The Hermit wept, and so did they:  
 They sigh'd; he hung his head.

O blind and jealous rage, he cried,  
 What evils from thee flow!  
 The Hermit paus'd; they silent mourn'd:  
 He wept, and they were woe.

Ah! when I heard my brother's name,  
 And saw my Lady bleed,  
 I rav'd, I wept, I curst my arm  
 That wrought the fatal deed.

In vain I clasp'd her to my breast,  
 And clos'd the ghastly wound;  
 In vain I press'd his bleeding corpse,  
 And rais'd it from the ground.

My brother, alas! spoke never more;  
 His precious life was flown.  
 She kindly strove to soothe my pain,  
 Regardless of her own.

Bertram, she said, be comforted,  
 And live to think on me:  
 May we in heaven that union prove  
 Which here was not to be!

Bertram, she said, I still was true;  
 Thou only hadst my heart:  
 May we hereafter meet in bliss!  
 We now, alas! must part.

For thee I left my father's hall,  
 And flew to thy relief;  
 When, lo! near Chiviot's fatal hills  
 I met a Scottish chief.



Lord Malcolm's son, whose proffer'd love  
I had refus'd with scorn;  
He slew my guards, and seiz'd on me,  
Upon that fatal morn:

And in these dreary hated walls  
He kept me close confin'd;  
And fondly sued, and warmly press'd  
To win me to his mind.

Each rising morn increas'd my pain,  
Each night increas'd my fear;  
When, wandering in this northern garb,  
Thy brother found me here.

He quickly form'd this brave design,  
To set me, captive, free;  
And on the moor his horses wait,  
Tied to a neighbouring tree.

Then haste, my love, escape away,  
And for thyself provide;  
And sometimes fondly think on her  
Who should have been thy bride.

Thus pouring comfort on my soul  
    Ev'n with her latest breath,  
She gave one parting fond embrace,  
    And clos'd her eyes in death.

In wild amaze, in speechless woe,  
    Devoid of sense I lay:  
Then sudden all in frantic mood  
    I meant myself to slay:

And rising up in furious haste  
    I seiz'd the bloody brand<sup>13</sup>:  
A sturdy arm here interpos'd,  
    And wrench'd it from my hand.

A crowd, that from the castle came,  
    Had miss'd their lovely ward;  
And seizing me to prison bare,  
    And deep in dungeon barr'd.

It chanc'd that on that very morn  
    Their chief was prisoner ta'en:  
Lord PERCY had us soon exchange'd,  
    And strove to soothe my pain.

And soon those honour'd dear remains  
 To England were convey'd;  
 And there within their silent tombs,  
 With holy rites were laid.

For me, I loath'd my wretched life,  
 And long to end it thought;  
 'Till time and books and holy men  
 Had better counsels taught.

They rais'd my heart to that pure source  
 Whence heavenly comfort flows:  
 They taught me to despise the world,  
 And calmly bear its woes.

No more the slave of human pride,  
 Vain hope, and sordid care;  
 I meekly vow'd to spend my life  
 In penitence and pray'r.

The bold Sir BERTRAM now no more,  
 Impetuous, haughty, wild;  
 But poor and humble BENEDICT,  
 Now lowly, patient, mild:

My lands I gave to feed the poor,  
    And sacred altars raise;  
And here a lonely Anchorite  
    I came to end my days.

This sweet sequester'd vale I chose,  
    These rocks, and hanging grove;  
For oft beside that murmuring stream  
    My love was wont to rove.

My noble Friend approv'd my choice;  
    This blest retreat he gave;  
And here I carv'd her beauteous form,  
    And scoop'd this holy cave.

Full fifty winters, all forlorn,  
    My life I've linger'd here;  
And daily o'er this sculptur'd saint  
    I drop the pensive tear.

And thou, dear brother of my heart!  
    So faithful and so true,  
The sad remembrance of thy fate  
    Still makes my bosom rue!

Yet not unpitied pass'd my life,  
 Forsaken, or forgot,  
 The PERCY and his noble Sons  
 Would grace my lowly cot.

Oft the great Earl, from toils of state  
 And cumb'rous pomp of power,  
 Would gladly seek my little cell,  
 To spend the tranquil hour.

But length of life is length of woe:—  
 I liv'd to mourn his fall;  
 I liv'd to mourn his godlike Sons,  
 And friends, and followers all.

But thou the honours of thy race,  
 Lov'd youth, shalt now restore;  
 And raise again the PERCY name  
 More glorious than before.

He ceas'd: and on the lovely pair  
 His choicest blessings laid;  
 While they with thanks and pitying tears  
 His mournful tale repaid.



And now what present course to take,  
 They ask the good old sire;  
 And, guided by his sage advice,  
 To Scotland they retire.

Mean-time their suit such favour found  
 At RABY'S stately hall,  
 Earl Neville, and his princely Spouse,  
 Now gladly pardon all.

She suppliant at her Nephew's<sup>14</sup> throne  
 The royal grace implor'd:  
 To all the honours of his race  
 The PERCY was restor'd.

The youthful Earl still more and more  
 Admir'd his beauteous dame:  
 NINE noble SONS to him she bore,  
 All worthy of their name.



## NOTES.

1 (p. 9.) *Beneath the REGENT's hand,*] ROBERT STUART, duke of Albany. See the continuator of FORDUN's Scoti-Chronicon, cap. 18, cap. 23, &c.

2 (p. 9.) *Till in the noble NEVILLE's house*] RALPH NEVILLE, first earl of Westmoreland, who chiefly resided at his two Castles of BRANCEPETH, and RABY, both in the bishoprick of Durham.

3 (p. 11.) *Sister of haughty BOLINGBROKE,*] JOAN, countess of Westmoreland, mother of the young lady, was daughter of JOHN of GAUNT, and half-sister of king HENRY IV.

4 (p. 12.) *We'll pass the night below.*] Adjoining to the cliff, which contains the Chapel of the Hermitage, are the remains of a small building, in which the Hermit dwelt. This consisted of one lower Apartment, with a little Bed-chamber over it, and is now in ruins: whereas the Chapel, cut in the solid rock, is still very entire and perfect.

5 (p. 15.) *Not far from hence stands COQUET isle,*] In the little Island of COQUET, near Warkworth, are still seen the ruins of a Cell, which belonged to the Benedictine monks of Tinemouth Abbey.

6 (p. 18.) *And near to these her CREST.*] This is a Bull's Head, the crest of the WIDDRINGTON family. All the Figures, &c. here described are still visible, only somewhat effaced with length of time.

7 (p. 20.) *Yon tower's her dwelling place;*] WIDDRINGTON castle is about five miles south of Warkworth.

8 (p. 22.) *First led his northern band.*] See Dugdale's Baronage, page 269, &c.

9 (p. 22.) *Assum'd the PERCY name.*] In Lower Normandy are three Places of the name of PERCY: whence the Family took the surname DE PERCY.

10 (p. 22.) *With all her lands and towers.*] WILLIAM DE PERCY, (fifth in Descent from GALFRED or GEFREY DE PERCY, son of MAINFRED,) assisted in the conquest of England, and had given him the large possessions in Yorkshire, of EMMA DE PORTE, (so the Norman writers name her,) whose father, a great Saxon lord, had been slain fighting along with Harold. This young lady, WILLIAM, from a principle of honour and generosity, married: for having had all her lands bestowed upon him by the Con-

queror, " he (to use the words of the old Whitby Chronicle) wedded hyr that was very heire to them, in " discharging of his conscience." See Harl. MSS. 692. (26.)—He died at Mountjoy, near Jerusalem, in the first Crusade.

11 (p. 22.) *In princely Brabant bred.*] AGNES DE PERCY, sole heiress of her house, married JOSCEINE DE LOVAÏN, youngest son of Godfrey Barbatus, duke of Brabant, and brother of queen Adeliza, second wife of king Henry I. He took the name of PERCY, and was ancestor of the earls of Northumberland. His son, lord RICHARD DE PERCY, was one of the twenty-six barons chosen to see the Magna Charta duly observed.

12 (p. 28.) *To WARK's fair castle bore.*] WARK castle, a fortress belonging to the English, and of great note in ancient times, stood on the southern bank of the river TWEED, a little to the east of TIVIOTDALE, and not far from Kelso. It is now entirely destroyed.

13 (p. 44.) *I sciz'd the bloody BRAND:]* i. e. Sword.

14 (p. 48.) *She suppliant at her NEPHEW's throne,*] King Henry V. Anno 1414.

THE account given in the foregoing ballad of young PERCY, the son of HOTSPUR, is confirmed by the following Extract from an old Chronicle formerly belonging to Whitby Abbey.

“ HENRY PERCY, the son of Sir HENRY PERCY, that was slayne at Shrewesbury, and of ELIZABETH, the daughter of the Erle of Marche, after the death of his Father and Grauntsyre, was exiled into Scotland\* in the time of king Henry the Fourth: but in the time of king Henry the Fifth, by the labour of JOHANNE the countes of Westmerland, (whose Daughter ALLANOR he HAD WEDDED IN COMING INTO ENGLAND,) he recovered the King’s grace, and the countye of Northumberland, so was the SECOND ERLE of Northumberland.

“ And of this Allanor his wife, he begate IX Sonnes, and III Daughters, whose names be JOHANNE, that is buried at Whytbye: THOMAS, lord Egremont: KATHARYNE GRAY of Rythyn: Sir RAFFE PERCY: WILLIAM PERCY, a Byshopp: RICHARD PERCY: JOHN, that dyed WITHOUT ISSUE: [another JOHN, called by Vincent† ‘ Johannes Percy senior de Warkworth:’] GEORGE PERCY, Clerk: HENRY that dyed WITHOUT ISSUE: ANNE——” [besides the eldest son and successor here omitted, because he comes in below, viz.]

“ HENRY PERCY, the THIRD Erle of NORTHUMBERLAND.”

*Vid. Harl. MSS. No. 692. (26.) in the British Museum.*

\* i. e. remained an Exile in Scotland during the Reign of king Henry IV. *In Scotia exulavit tempore Henrici Regis quarti.* Lat. MS. penes Duc. North.

† See his Great Baronag. No. 20, in the Heralds-office.

## POSTSCRIPT.

IT will perhaps gratify the curious Reader to be informed, that from a word or two formerly legible over one of the Chapel Doors, it is believed that the Text there inscribed was that Latin verse of the Psalmist\*, which is in our Translation,

MY TEARS HAVE BEEN MY MEAT DAY AND NIGHT.

It is also certain, that the memory of the first Hermit was held in such regard and veneration by the PERCY Family, that they afterwards maintained a Chantry Priest, to reside in the Hermitage, and celebrate Mass in the Chapel: whose allowance, uncommonly liberal and munificent, was continued down to the Dissolution of the Monasteries; and then the whole Salary, together with the Hermitage and all its dependencies, reverted back to the Family, having never been endowed in mortmain. On this account we have no Record, which fixes the date of the Foundation, or gives any particular account of the first Hermit; but the following Instrument will shew the liberal Exhibition offered to his Successors. It is the Patent granted to the last Hermit in 1532, and is copied from an ancient MS. book of Grants, &c. of the VIth Earl of Northumberland, in Henry VIIIth's time †.

\* Psal. xlii. 3.

† Classed, F. I. No. 1. penes Duc. Northumb.



“ SIR GEORGE LANCASTRE PATENT OF XX MERKS  
BY YERE.

“ HENRY Erle of Northumberland, &c. Knowe youe that I the  
 “ said Erle, in consideration of the diligent and thankfull service, that  
 “ my wellbeloved Chaplen Sir GEORGE LANCASTRE hath don unto me  
 “ the said Erle, and also for the goode and vertus dispotion that I do  
 “ perceive in him: And for that he shall have in his daily recommenda-  
 “ tion and praiers the good estate of all suche noble Blode and other  
 “ Personages, as be now levyng; And the Soules of such noble Blode  
 “ as be departed to the mercy of God owte of this present lyve, Whos  
 “ Names are conteyned and wrettyn in a Table upon perchment signed  
 “ with thande of me the said Erle, and delivered to the custodie and  
 “ keapyng of the said sir George Lancastre: And further, that he shall  
 “ kepe and saye his devyn service in celebratyng and doynge Masse of  
 “ *Requiem* every weke accordinge as it is written and set furth in the  
 “ saide Table: HAVE geven and graunted, and by these presentes do  
 “ gyve and graunte unto the said sir George, myn ARMYTAGE belded in  
 “ a Rock of stone within my Parke of WARKWORTH in the Countie of  
 “ Northumbreland in the honour of the blessed Trynete, With a yerly  
 “ Stipende of twenty Merks by yer\*, from the feest of seint Michell  
 “ tharchaungell last past afore the date hereof yerly duryng the natural  
 “ lyve of the said sir George: and also I the said Erle have geven and  
 “ graunted, and by these Presents do gyve and graunte unto the said sir  
 “ George Lancastre, the occupation of one litle Gresground of myn  
 “ called Cony-garth nygh adjoynyng the said Harnytage, only to his  
 “ own use and proufit wynter and sumer duryng the said terme; THE

\* This would be equal to 100*l.* per annum now. See the *Chronicon Pretiosum*.

“ Garden and Orteyarde belongyng the said Armytage; THE Gate\* and  
 “ Pasture of Twelf Kye and a Bull, with their Calves suking; AND two  
 “ Horses goyin and beyng within my said Parke of Warkworth wynter  
 “ and somer; ONE Draught of Fisshe every Sondaie in the yere to be  
 “ drawn fornenst† the said Armytage, called the Trynete Draught;  
 “ AND Twenty Lods of Fyrewode to be taken of my Wodds called  
 “ Shilbotell Wode, duryng the said term. The said Stipend of xx Merks  
 “ by yer to be taken and perceived‡ yerly of the rent and ferme of my  
 “ Fisshyng of Warkworth, by thands of the Fermour or Fermours of the  
 “ same for the tyme beyng yerly at the times ther used and accustomed  
 “ by evyn Portions. IN wytnes whereof to thes my  
 “ Letters Patentes I the said Erle have set the Scale Allowe in recompense  
herof yerly x<sup>ii</sup>§.  
 “ of myn Armes: YEVEN undre my Signet at my Richard Ryehe.  
 “ Castell of Warkworth, the third daye of Decembre, in the xxiii<sup>th</sup> Yer  
 “ of the Reigne of our Sovereyn Lorde kyng Henry the eight.”

On the dissolution of the Monasteries, the above Patent was produced before the Court of Augmentation in Michaelmas Term, 20 Oct. A. 29. Hen. VIII. when the same was allowed by the Chancellor and Council of the said Court, and all the profits confirmed to the incumbent Sir George Lancaster; Excepting that in compensation for the annual Stipend of Twenty Marks, he was to receive a Stipend of Ten

\* i. e. Going: from the verb, 'To Gae.

† Or fore-anest: i. e. opposite.

‡ Sic MS.

§ So the MS. Sir Richard Rych was Chancellor of the Augmentations at the Suppression of the Monasteries.

Marks, and to have a free Chapel called The Rood Chapel, and the Hospital of St. Leonard, within the Barony of Wigdon, in the County of Cumberland.

After the perusal of the above PATENT it will perhaps be needless to caution the Reader against a Mistake, some have fallen into; of confounding this Hermitage NEAR Warkworth, with a Chantry founded WITHIN the town itself, by Nicholas de Farnham, bishop of Durham, in the reign of Henry III. who appropriated the Church of Brankeston for the maintenance there of two Benedictine Monks from Durham\*. That small monastic foundation is indeed called a CELL by bishop Tanner †: but he must be very ignorant, who supposes that by the word CELL is necessarily to be understood a Hermitage; whereas it was commonly applied to any small conventual establishment, which was dependant on another.

As for the Chapel belonging to this endowment of bishop Farnham, it is mentioned as in ruins in several old Surveys of Queen Elizabeth's time; and its scite, not far from Warkworth Church, is still remembered. But that there was never more than ONE Priest maintained, at one and the same time, within the HERMITAGE, is plainly proved (if any further proof be wanting) by the following Extract from a Survey of Warkworth, made in the Year 1567 ‡, viz.

“ Ther is in the Parke (sc. of Warkworth) also one Howse hewyn  
“ within one Cragge, which is called the HARMITAGE CHAPEL: In the

\* Ang. Sacr. p. 738.

† Not. Mon. p. 396.

‡ By Geo. Clarkson, MS. penes Duc. North.

“ same ther haith bene ONE PREAST keaped, which did such godlye Ser-  
“ vices as that tyme was used and celebrated. The Manton House [sc.  
“ the small building adjoining to the Cragg] ys nowe in decaye: the  
“ Closes that appertained to the said Chantrie is occupied to his Lord-  
“ ship’s use.”

To complete the Subject of the HERMITAGE OF WARKWORTH, it may be proper to subjoin here, from Captain Grose's "Antiquities of England and Wales," 1775, 4 Vols. 4to.

*An Extract of a Letter from Newcastle upon Tyne, dated the Sixth of September, 1771.*

\*\*\*\*\* I SHALL now, in compliance with your request, attempt to give you a Description of the ruins of the ancient Hermitage at Warkworth, which the very interesting Ballad, lately published on that subject, excited in me so great a desire to see.

As I went from Newcastle, I quitted the great Northern Road at a small village called Felton, (which stands about mid-way between Morpeth and Alnwick,) and had a most romantic ride for the most part down a most beautiful rocky Vale, worn by the current of the river Coquet, which afforded a succession of very picturesque scenes.

I was much pleased with the situation of Warkworth itself; particularly with the Castle, which, although in ruins, is a fine Monument of ancient Grandeur, being one of the proud Fortresses, which heretofore belonged to the noble House of Percy, and from them descended to the present Duke and Duchess of Northumberland; who, together with the princely possessions, have inherited the generosity and magnificence of that great family.

Warkworth Castle deserves itself a particular description: I shall, therefore, at present only observe, that it is very boldly situate on an eminence, and overlooks the river Coquet, where it discharges its waters into the sea, and almost washes an Island of the same name; which, from its circular form, easy distance from the shore, and a little antique Tower, the remains of a small Monastic Edifice erected upon it, is a most beautiful object seen from every part of the coast.

From the Castle we ascended not more than half a mile up the river, before we came to the Hermitage; which is probably the best preserved and most entire now remaining in these kingdoms. It still contains three Apartments, all of them hollowed in the solid Rock, and hanging over the river in the most picturesque manner imaginable, with a covering of ancient hoary Trees, Reliques of the venerable Woods, in which this fine solitude was anciently embowered.

As the Hermitage, with all its striking peculiarities, is very exactly described in the Ballad of the *Hermit of Warkworth*, I might be content to transcribe the descriptive part of that Poem: but as you have insisted upon my relating to you what I saw myself, I shall endeavour to obey you.

The Cave contains three Apartments; which, by way of distinction, I will venture to call the Chapel, Sacristy, and Antichapel. Of these, the Chapel is very entire and perfect: but the two others have suffered



by the falling down of the rock at the west end. By this accident a beautiful Pillar, which formerly stood between these two apartments, and gave an elegant finishing to this end of the Sacred Vaults, was, within the memory of old people, destroyed.

The Chapel is not more than eighteen feet long, nor more than seven and a half in width and height; but is modelled and executed in a very beautiful style of Gothic Architecture. The Sides are ornamented with neat Octagon Pillars, all cut in the solid Rock; which branch off into the ceiling, and forming little pointed Arches, terminate in Groins. At the East end is a handsome plain Altar, to which the Priest ascended by two Steps: These, in the course of ages, have been much worn away through the soft yielding nature of the stone. Behind the Altar is a little Niche, which probably received the Crucifix, or the Pix. Over this Niche is still seen the faint outline of a Glory.

On the North-side of the Altar is a very beautiful Gothic Window, executed like all the rest, in the living Rock. This Window transmitted light from the Chapel to the Sacristy; or what else shall we call it? being a plain oblong room which runs parallel with the Chapel, somewhat longer than it, but not so wide. At the east end of this apartment are still seen the remains of an Altar, at which Mass was occasionally sung, as well as in the Chapel. Between it and the Chapel is a square Perforation, with some appearance of Bars, or a Lattice, through which the Hermit might attend Confession, or behold the elevation of the Host without entering the Chapel. Near this Perforation is a neat Door-case opening into the Chapel out of this Side-room or Sacristy, which contains a Benching cut in the rock, whence is seen a most beautiful View up the river, finely overhung with woods. Over the Door case, within the Chapel, is carved a small neat Scutcheon, with all the emblems of the Passion, sc. the Cross, the Crown of Thorns, the Nails, the Spear, and the Sponge.

On the south side of the Altar is another Window, and below it a neat Cenotaph or Tomb, ornamented with three human Figures elegantly cut in the rock. The principal Figure represents a Lady lying along, still very entire and perfect: over her breast hovers what probably was an Angel, but much defaced: and at her feet is a Warrior erect, and perhaps originally in a praying posture; but he is likewise mutilated by Time. At her feet is also a rude sculpture of a Bull's or Ox's Head; which the Editor of the Ballad not unreasonably conjectures to have been the Lady's Crest. This was, as he observes, the Crest of the Widdrington Family, whose castle is but five Miles from this Hermitage. It was also the ancient Crest of the Nevilles, and of one or two other families in the North.

On the same side is another Door-case, and near it an Excavation to contain the Holy Water. Over both the Door-cases are still seen the traces of Letters, vestiges of two ancient Inscriptions; but so much defaced as to be at present illegible. I must refer you to the Poem for a further account of them.

This Door opens into a little vestibule, containing two square niches, in which the Hermit sat to contemplate; and his view from hence was well calculated to inspire meditation. He looked down upon the River which washes the foot of the Hermitage, and glides away in a constant murmuring lapse; and he might

thence have taken occasion, like the Author of the Night Thoughts, to remind some young thoughtless Visitant,

“ Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a stream,  
 “ For ever changing, unperceiv’d the change.  
 “ In the same stream none ever bath’d him twice;  
 “ To the same life none ever twice awoke.  
 “ We call the stream the same, the same we think  
 “ Our life, though still more rapid in its flow;  
 “ Nor mark the Much irrevocably laps’d,  
 “ And mingled with the sea.”

Over the Inner Door, within the Vestibule, hangs another Scutcheon with some Sculpture, which we took for the representation of a Gauntlet; perhaps it was the Founder’s Arms or Crest. On the outward face of the Rock, near the small Vestibule above-mentioned, is a winding stair-case cut also in the living stone, and leading through a neat arched Door-case in the same, up to the top of the Cliff which joins the level of the ancient Park; and here was planted the Hermit’s Orchard. This has long since been destroyed; but Cherry-trees propagated from his Plantations are still scattered over the neighbouring thicket. His Garden was below at the foot of the hill, as we were informed; and indeed some straggling flowers and one little solitary Gooseberry-bush, which still grows out of a cleft in the rock, confirm the tradition.

As all the Apartments above-described seem to have been appropriated to sacred uses, you will naturally enquire where was the Dwelling of the Hermit, or at least of his Successors? This was a small square Building, erected at the foot of the Cliff, that contains the Chapel. It consisted of one single dwelling-room, with a Bed-chamber over it, and a small Kitchen adjoining; which is now fallen in and covered with earth; but the ruins of the Oven still mark its situation, and shew that some of the inhabitants of this Hermitage did not always dislike good cheer.

This little Building, erected below the Chapel, being composed of materials brought together by human hands, has long since gone to ruin; whereas the Walls of the Chapel itself, being as old as the World, will, if not purposely destroyed, probably last as long as it, and continue to amuse the latest posterity. It gave me particular pleasure to observe, that the present noble Proprietors have thought this curiosity not unworthy their attention, and have therefore bestowed a proper care to have it kept clean and neat; have cleared the Hermit’s Path, which was choaked up, by the River’s side; have restored his Well, (a small bubbling Fountain of clear water, which issues from the adjoining Rock); and have renewed the Wood by new Plantations at the top of the Cliff, where the Trees had been thinned or destroyed by Time.

In this delightful solitude, so beautiful in itself, and so venerable for its antiquity, you will judge with what pleasure I perused the very amusing and interesting Tale of the Hermit of Warkworth: having the whole Scene before me, and fancying I was present at the Hermit’s tender relation.

And this leads me to your last query; what foundation the author of the poem had for his Story, which he gives as founded on truth? By all the enquiries I could make in the neighbourhood, it is the received tradition, that the Founder of this Hermitage was one of the Bertram family, who were anciently Lords of Bothal Castle, and had great possessions in this County. He is also thought to be the same Bertram, who having built Brinkburn Abbey, and Brinkshaugh Chapel higher up the River, at last retired to end his life in this sequestered valley. But the Editor has given reasons, why he thinks the Hermitage was founded at a later period than those Buildings, by another of the same Name and Family. It is also the universal tradition, That he imposed his penance upon himself to expiate the murder of his Brother. As for the Lady, I could not find that any thing particular is remembered concerning her; but the elegant Sculpture of her Figure upon the Tomb, and the Crest at her feet, seem sufficiently to warrant the Story of the Ballad.

The old Record of the endowment of this Hermitage by the Percy Family, which the Editor has printed at the end of his Poem, is a curiosity very singular in its kind. When I perused it, I could not help smiling at the Article of the *Trinity Draught of Fish*, to be taken opposite to the Chapel, which was to be the Hermit's Perquisite every Sunday. It was, I assure you, no contemptible Perquisite: for there is a very rich Salmon-Fishery in this River belonging to the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland; and I was told, that at one single draught this Summer, more than Three Hundred fish had been taken opposite to the Hermitage\*.

I shall conclude my long, tedious Description, with a Stanza from Spenser; which, if you will pardon a few alterations, will give you a pretty exact Picture of the place.

“ A little lonely Hermitage there stood  
 “ Down in a Dale, hard by a River's side,  
 “ Beneath a mossy Cliff, o'erhung with Wood,  
 “ And in the living Rock, there close beside,  
 “ A holy Chapel, entering we descried;  
 “ Wherein the Hermit duly wont to say  
 “ His lonely prayers, each morn and even tide:  
 “ Thereby the crystal stream did gently play,  
 “ Which through the woody Vale came rolling down alway.”

\* I have been assured that more than Four Hundred fish, chiefly Salmon, Salmon-Trouts, and Gilts, have been taken at one Draught between the Hermitage and the Sea, which is about two miles distant.

THE END.

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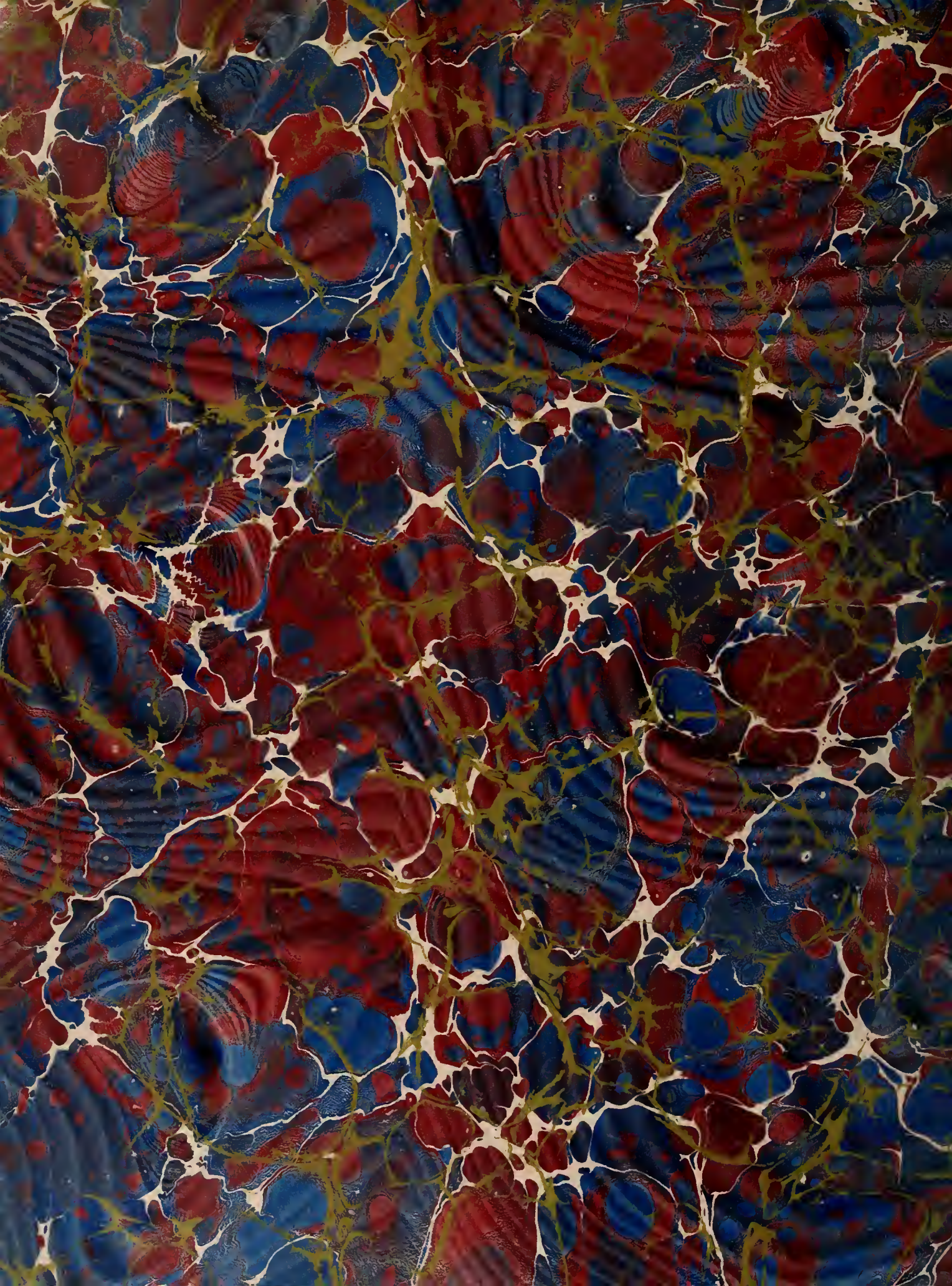














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